**FHBA Legislative Session Update**

The FHBA enjoyed a very successful 2017 Legislative Session. More details will follow on successes with Estopple Fee Caps, repealing the automatic sunset of the Condo Bulk Buyer liability issue, Pollution Notification Legislation and others.

Amongst the many good public policy provisions of CS/CS/HB 1021 by Rep. Avila and Sen. Perry, four key areas will insure that construction an economic driver in Florida:

1. The bill continues the Florida Construction Industry Workforce Taskforce, the first of its kind in Florida to bring together all of the construction trades.  This stakeholders group works with the industry to assess current workforce needs and project future demand. Simultaneously, this group works with workforce agencies and education institutions to properly train individuals for careers in the construction industry. The construction industry is experiencing a workforce shortage of epic proportions and folks need jobs.

2. It creates additional pathways for individuals to qualify as building code inspectors or plans examiners, a workforce shortage costing construction delays and cost overruns. From Hurricane Andrew, we learned that strong building codes only work if they are enforced. We must ensure that enough building inspectors and examiners are available to protect Florida consumers.

3. The bill requires the Florida Building Commission to adopt codes that must maintain eligibility for federal funding and discounts from the National Flood Insurance Program, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development—provisions not guaranteed in current State law with respect to code adoption.

4. The bill brings sanity back to the building code development process. In lieu of scrapping Florida’s code every three years and building it back using the International Code Council (ICC) as a base, the bill empowers the Florida Building Commission (FBC) to keep Florida’s strong code intact and then incorporate the most recently appropriate ICC recommendations. The FBC spends an inordinate amount of time and resources during this triennial cycle, rehabilitating the inadequacies of the ICC. As a result, the FBC is often unable to fully vet the necessity of all ICC related cost-driving changes, which are much more product-driven versus improving structural integrity.